

CPYRGHT

Khrushchev's Super Weapon Killed Soviets



Associated Press Wirephoto

Oleg Penkovsky

From Cable Dispatches

LONDON.

A 'Fantastic' super-weapon of which former Premier Khrushchev boasted in 1960 blew up in that year and killed Soviet rocket chief Marshal Mitrofan I. Nedelin and 300 others, the Guardian said yesterday.

The weapon was a missile with a nuclear propellant, the Guardian's Communist affairs expert Victor Zorza, reported.

Mr. Zorza quoted the still secret reports of Oleg Penkovsky, the former deputy chief of the foreign department of Russia's State Committee on Scientific Research and Coordination, executed in May, 1963, for selling secrets to the

West.

Col. Penkovsky's reports were smuggled out of Russia two years ago, and are to be published next month in the United States and Britain.

The editor of the reports, New York writer Frank Gibney, would not say how the papers were smuggled out, or how they were made available to him.

Mr. Zorza surmises that the reports were released by the Central Intelligence Agency in an abbreviated form as part of the propaganda battle between Soviet and Western intelligence agencies.

The Russians announced Marshal Nedelin had been killed Oct. 25, 1960, in an air accident. The following December, however, Italy's Continentale news agency said that he had been among 100 killed when "a new Russian rocket" scheduled to be launched during the Nov. 7 anniversary celebrations of the Bolshevik revolution, exploded on Oct. 21.

Now Mr. Zorza also reports that the secret weapon blew up as scientists rushed to test it in time for the anniversary celebrations. He wrote:

"The countdown went according to plan, but the new missile failed to leave the ground. The observers waited for some 20 minutes, then came out of the shelter. At this point the missile exploded, killing 300 people, among them the Commander-in-Chief of the Soviet Missile Forces, Marshal Nedelin."

Oleg Penkovsky stood trial with a British businessman and engineer, Greville Wynne, who was accused by the Russians of being a contact man. Sentenced to eight years deprivation of freedom, Mr. Wynne was released 11 months later in exchange for Soviet master spy Conan Trofimovich, who had been captured by the British after worming out secrets of the United Kingdom's research into under-sea atomic devices.

Mr. Penkovsky passed over secret documents to the West for 16 months on end, before being detected. He reportedly was not a paid agent, but spied for the West because of a zealous hatred of the Soviet regime and because he feared the West and Russia were on a collision course that have led to nuclear war.

Throughout the time he was working for the West he kept copious diaries and notes, from which the reports are taken.

The reports are to be released in a 14 part series by the Publishers Newspaper Syndicate, starting on October 31, and published in a hardcover edition on Nov. 19 by Doubleday.

Mr. Penkovsky was linked with some of the highest officials in the Soviet government and military establishment. But little was learned about him during his trial.

Mr. Khrushchev first spoke of the Russian super-weapon on Jan. 14, 1960 while addressing the Soviet parliament.

"The Central Committee of the Communist party and the Soviet government can inform you, comrade deputies," he said, "that though the weapons we now have are formidable weapons, the weapon we have in the hatching stage today is even more perfect, even more formidable."

"The weapon which is being developed—and is—as they say in the portfolio of our scientists and designers—is a fantastic weapon."

Then on March 16, 1962, Mr. Khrushchev indicated that the weapon had been perfected, announcing that the Soviet Union had created a new "global rocket" that could attack the United States from any direction.

"Our scientists and engineers," he said, "have created a new intercontinental rocket which they call global. This rocket is invulnerable to antimissile weapons."